



*Maddock Public School
District No. 9*

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FCC MAIL ROOM

April 6, 1996

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Mr. Secretary

I am writing with regard to Docket No. 96-45. I realize that you may not receive this before April 8, but I want to express my feelings anyway.

On March 11, 1996, I had the opportunity to hear Mr. Adam Golodner speak at a workshop in Valley City, North Dakota, on the subject of telecommunications for the future. He believes as I do that everyone, inner city folks, urban, and rural people alike, will need to have adequate access to the Internet.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996, which went into law on February 8, was a necessary step in helping all people to obtain such access, and I support that Act. I do not think, however, that it is enough. Funding sources for acquiring the necessary LAN and other equipment necessary for a community-wide project in our area are hard to find, as I'm sure is the case in a lot of other places. This is a challenge that we are facing right now in rural Maddock, North Dakota.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely

Flo Kallenbach

Flo Kallenbach
Technology Coordinator
Business, Math, and Computer Teacher

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NEONATAL NURSES

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April 9, 1996

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

RE: CC Docket No. 96-45

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The National Association of Neonatal Nurses (NANN) represents over 13,000 nurses, many of whom are practitioners. We are concerned about the Federal Communications Commission "Notice of Proposed Rulemaking and Order Establishing Joint Board," as set forth by the Telecommunications Act of 1996, Section 254 (a)(1). We are 11 years old and our mission focuses on providing safe and effective care to neonates (the first 28 days of life) and their families. For the most part, we provide acute care in urban and rural settings. Because many of our neonates require highly specialized care, communications between distance sites and tertiary referral centers is essential.

Neonatal nurse practitioners (NNPs) are registered nurses with advanced academic and clinical experience; they are licensed to diagnose and manage acute and chronic problems. Often, they are responsible for guiding outlying hospitals in the care or transfer of patients, and for coordinating discharge plans that will be carried out in the community. One method to facilitate this information exchange is via telecommunications-computer linkages. These linkages are important to access computerized databases such as MEDLINE (a database of the National Library of Medicine), NICU NET (a list server that allows clinical questions to be posed), and national specialty organizational offices, such as NANN, for specific information on nursing standards, standards of care, or exchange of information regarding nurses with certain expertise.

Other essential areas of communication are those that deal with diagnosis and management. Use of consultative services to acquire medical images, history data, etcetera help with differential diagnoses and management modalities. In addition, retrieval of articles, text and images from the World Wide Web can help with parent education and staff education on site.

— continued —

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Federal Communications Commission
April 9, 1996
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Telecommunication via laptop computers can also allow home visit information or information such as vital signs and cardiopulmonary patterns to be downloaded to a tertiary center for consultation. *It is a cost-effective way to "expand" the health care team at any institution without increasing the cost of the care provided.* Parents could also use these linkages to get "quick, round the clock" answers to questions they might have. Health information linkages will make it possible for anyone in any community to obtain health care information specific to their neonate without traveling from their own neighborhood.

NANN supports the development of "Health Information Kiosks." These kiosks will serve as community-accessible workstations located in public buildings that will empower families to obtain information they feel they truly need.

Use of ISDN-Universal Support Service Standard is an important step since it eliminates some of the overload problems of gaining access to the information highway. It will need to be developed, along with access to touch-tone service and enhanced 911 systems. The latter is especially important for when a woman is in very early preterm labor. ISDN allows simultaneous voice and data transmission, automatic caller identification, still color-image and video transmission, and electronic data interchange. This exchange is wireless-without modem, which makes it more accessible to a larger segment of the population. This may mean more people will actually attempt to use the system. Use of ISDN has another advantage. It is a less expensive, wide-bandwidth connection medium for the large number of places where fiber optics cannot be justified or is not available. These systems are less costly than fiber optics. They are available via all long-distance companies and in all states except Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Alaska.

Because our clients cannot speak for themselves, assessment data and easy access to quick consultation, especially from rural settings to tertiary centers, is essential. Practitioners need to be able to access their patients' data prior to transport to a tertiary center, after the infant is transferred back to a rural setting, and even once discharged. Telecommunication provides the vehicle for this data highway without increasing personnel or adding the stress of travel to the family. NANN supports refining and increasing access to any vehicle for telecommunication and the interchange of information necessary for quality of care.

Sincerely,


Carole Kenner, RNC, DNS, FAAN
President, NANN